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ABSTRACT

This report contains a synopsis of the binational conference and features brief summaries of all the papers presented at the conference. Over 350 educators, community leaders, and researchers were brought together to discuss the educational extremes found along the border between the United States and Mexico and to investigate instructional approaches that address the unique characteristics of this region. The following questions helped to shape the scope and content of the conference: What is the current condition of bilingualism, particularly in the United States? How can educators break the cycle of low performance in border schools? How can teachers and administrators reinvent school norms, structures, and culture so that there is respect for linguistic and cultural differences? The conference was sponsored by the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk, the Texas Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Assistance Project at Johns Hopkins University, and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. The summaries are organized into the following categories: the status of education for English language learners in the United States; theoretical concerns influencing border pedagogy; calls for changes in policy or practice; studies of effective programs and practices; and professional development issues. An appendix provides a list of presenters and presentations cited. (KFT)

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February 25, 2000

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Introduction

In terms of education, the border between México and the United States is a region of extremes. Many of its schools have a history of impoverishment and of academic and linguistic underachievement. On the other hand, schools are emerging — including international, binational, and two-way bilingual schools — that hold great promise as academic and socio-cultural models for the future.

The Fourth Binational Conference, held in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez, México, in January 1999, sought to investigate these extremes. *In Search of a Border Pedagogy: Bilingualism and Professional Development in Schools, Adult Education and the Business Sector* brought together 350 educators, researchers, and community representatives to discuss the need for instructional approaches that address the unique circumstances of the border region. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR) Texas Teacher Recruitment, Retention and Assistance Project at Johns Hopkins University and the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Giroux (1992) defines *border pedagogy* as an "explicitly stated agenda of progressive education." He proposes that a border pedagogy must take up the dual tasks of creating new objects of knowledge and of addressing the ways in which inequalities, the distribution of power, and human suffering are rooted in basic institutional structures. According to Giroux and to many of those presenting at the conference, what is needed is nothing less than a social, cultural, and pedagogical transformation, not only in the border region but in all schools serving diverse student populations.

In addition to Giroux's conception of a transformative border pedagogy, the following questions helped to shape the conference's scope and content:

- What is the current condition of bilingualism, particularly in the U.S., where bilingual education has been such a divisive issue?
- How can educators break the cycle of low performance in border schools?
- How can administrators and teachers reinvent school norms, structures, and culture so that there is respect for linguistic and cultural differences?

- What influences are economic and social trends having on border education, and vice versa?

The conference featured more than sixty speakers in a variety of formats, from keynote speeches to informal roundtable discussions. Topics ranged from learning theory to bilingualism in the business sector, from first grade reading to adult education. If any one issue dominated the discussions, it was professional development, partly because of its explicit inclusion in the conference title, and partly because of presenters' understanding that, as researcher Raymond Padilla put it, "one of the key elements in achieving success. . . is the development of well-trained bilingual teachers."

This proceedings document offers a sampling of the conference's rich array of ideas and expertise. The document highlights conclusions from those presentations for which written summaries or conference papers could be obtained. It is organized according to five broad themes: the status of education for English language learners in the United States; theoretical concerns that are or should be influencing border pedagogy; specific calls for change in educational policy or practice; descriptions of effective programs and practices; and professional development issues. An appendix lists the presentations cited, along with the presenters and their professional affiliations.

The status of education for English language learners in the U.S.

Several conference presentations described conditions among language minority students in the United States and current educational policies and practices for English language learners. There appeared to be broad concern that, as Arizona State University professor of bilingual education ***Christian Faltis*** stated, the country is facing "one of the most anti-immigrant, anti-bilingual education, and anti-pluralism eras" in recent U.S. history. Faltis, among others, cited the dismantling of affirmative action programs, anti-immigration movements in U.S. border states, and the impact of the English-only movement on bilingual education. As a result, he observed, we are seeing an increase in dropout rates among language minority students and a decrease in their rates of college enrollment.

In his paper, ***Gilbert N. García,*** Contract Officer Technical Representative with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, described characteristics of students with limited English proficiency. He noted that "approximately 45 percent of the current LEP school-aged population are foreign-born immigrants." Of the 55 percent of school-age LEP students who are U.S.-born, many "arrive at school with poorly developed literacy skills in either their native language or English or both languages." Although "there is no typical LEP child," Dr. García noted, most share several

characteristics, including limited English language proficiency, lack of readiness for school success, and high rates of poverty.

Dr. García also provided an overview of current educational policies and services for students with limited English proficiency. He explained that most programs include specific provisions regarding "the amount of time that LEP students are permitted to receive language support services or remain in alternative educational programs." Such decisions are "rarely based on the progress that LEP students have made (as measured by valid assessments) in the acquisition of English language skills and grade-appropriate subject matter." Programs also generally include specific requirements regarding the language of instruction, with a predominant focus on English language instruction. Supports for students in their native language are "rare" in middle and high schools. (Additional information regarding Dr. García's presentation may be found under "Effective programs and practices.")

Dr. García's description was supported by Dr. Faltis, who presented an overview of the status of secondary bilingual education. The history of secondary education in the U.S., Dr. Faltis observed, "show[s] it to be virtually unaffected with respect to meeting the needs of ethnic and language minority students." If bilingual programs are available at all, they tend to be "fragmented, isolated, and administered from the top down." Students in such programs "are more likely to take classes that do not lead to graduation, that are segregated from the rest of the student body, and that have limited sequential offerings geared to their special needs." There is a much more substantial research and experience base with bilingual education at the elementary level. However, Dr. Faltis concluded, "what works well with young children who are becoming bilingual does not transfer well into the fragmented academic and social life of secondary school communities." He emphasized the need for an intensified research focus on secondary immigrant and bilingual students. (Additional information regarding Dr. Faltis's presentation may be found under "Calls for change.")

Another presenter, ***Carmen Rodríguez***, Attorney in El Paso, TX, noted that educators cannot rely on U.S. law to assure that schools will meet the needs of language minority students. She presented a legal framework and history of bilingual education in the U.S., beginning with the landmark case, *Lau v. Nichols*, in 1974. Neither statutes nor court-established laws specifically obligate school districts to provide bilingual education; rather they call for "appropriate action," a term that remains loosely defined. "These laws have provided no authority to try to enforce the implementation of a specific type of bilingual education program." In fact, Ms. Rodríguez noted, "recently the use of the law has been turned against" those advocating bilingual education. Her description of the political backlash against immigration and against bilingual education echoed that of Dr. Faltis.

Ms. Rodríguez concluded, "It appears that the best support for bilingual education today at the elementary school level, through high school, vocational training and lifelong learning, is not the U.S. Constitution nor any of the other federal laws" related to bilingual issues. "It is not a public policy to provide the best educational opportunities for all our children." Rather, she stated, the best impetus. . .

> is and will be the global marketplace. . . The more that public education, and vocational education curricula are linked to the needs of the job market, the greater the appreciation will be for development of true bilingual graduates who are also job ready.

A final status report, made by ***Susan Rippberger*** and ***Kathleen Staudt*** of the University of Texas at El Paso, described the ways in which "cultural values are transmitted and reflected in primary education on both sides of the U.S.-México border." The presenters reported on a three-year comparison study in schools along the Texas-México border, in which they found "variations and contradictions in values reinforced in schools" on both sides of the border. The study provided a detailed description as to "how teachers consciously and unconsciously, overtly and covertly teach. . . dominant paradigms, i.e., cultural and social expectations such as a work ethic." Major findings included the observation "that teachers, administrators, students, and parents on both sides of the border had many of the same universal values, but that there is a general hierarchy of values uniquely ordered by each culture." Drs. Rippberger and Staudt noted differences in educators' focus (1) on time increments vs. the natural flow of human relationships as a primary organizing factor, (2) on social groups vs. individual behavior, and (3) on the extent to which the customs and values of the other country were recognized.

Theoretical concerns influencing a border pedagogy

While much of the conference addressed educational practice, both positive and negative, several presentations focused on theoretical perspectives that can help to guide the development of a transformative border pedagogy. Theoretical discussions tended to address one, or both, of two general orientations. The first described elements of constructivist learning theory, with a particular focus on authentic, culturally relevant learning activities and — most predominant — on the importance of social interaction and the valuing of students' unique voices. A second theoretical lens examined constructs of power between dominant and subordinate cultures. Some presenters explicitly linked these two theoretical discussions, exploring ways in which power relationships influence social interaction in the classroom and either encourage or discourage specific voices.

Three presenters specifically discussed theoretical constructs set out by Lev S. Vygotsky, whose work is widely considered as seminal in the development of social constructivist theory. ***Ramón Ferreiro Gravié***, a professor at the Universidad La Salle in México City, México, discussed Vygotsky's work and its relevance to border educational approaches. He began with a general discussion of the basic tenets of constructivist learning theory, then focused more narrowly on Vygotskian constructivism, which emphasizes sociocultural interactions. Dr. Ferreiro Gravié recommended that teachers build on students' prior experiences, posing learning problems that create a conflict with students' existing understandings. He also recommended that students work in teams as well as individually to solve learning problems and reflect on their work.

Similarly, ***Esteban Díaz***, a professor from California State University at Santa Barbara, presented a Vygotskian perspective on the role of the teacher in diverse classrooms. Dr. Díaz proposed that "teachers must become sociocultural mediators in order to be successful with students." This involves understanding each student's level of development and mediating the instructional environment so that students can bridge the gap between the known and the unknown. Such an instructional approach is highly interactive and respectful of each child's cultural experience and values. Dr. Díaz noted that, to function effectively in the role of sociocultural mediator, teachers need specific "cultural and pedagogical knowledge." He concluded, "The teacher must establish structures of inquiry and dialogue that support, build on, and expand [each] student's styles of communicating and viewing the world." (For additional information regarding Dr. Díaz's presentation, see "Professional development issues.")

Robert DeVillar, chair of the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Texas at El Paso, linked Vygotskian concepts, particularly that of the "zone of proximal development," with John Dewey's characterization of learning as "an active and constructive process." The goal of teaching, Dr. DeVillar explained, is to help students to "function as independent thinkers through a process that necessarily starts with social interaction, where the unknown is clarified: and this goal is accomplished through the use of language, which becomes comprehensible in the company of a more capable adult or peer." Thus "social interaction is a natural, essential, and expected element in developing individual knowledge." However, Dr. DeVillar notes, this perspective is not reflected in standard educational practice. Instead schools

> have opted for the model of instruction that favors, promotes, and demands a generalized, mass production curriculum; competition among students; individual work; silence and order on the part of the students; instruction by transmission.

Josephine Arce, from the Elementary Department of the College of Education at San Francisco State University, discussed educational theories underlying what she described as "transformative education." In a presentation describing one particular border classroom (for additional information, see "Effective programs and practices"), she discussed the theoretical underpinnings for the teacher's successful "transformational" approach, including critical pedagogy, "feminine" or "nurturing" pedagogy, and constructivism. Dr. Arce noted that "taken together they form a comprehensive alternative body of teaching practices." Central to each theory is the premise that in order to learn, learners "must construct new meanings" for themselves.

Both Dr. Arce, in a separate presentation, and Dr. DeVillar also discussed theories of power relationships between dominant and subordinate cultures. Dr. Arce described the concept of "cultural hegemony." She quoted Henry Giroux's (1981) definition of cultural hegemony as

> ideological control by the dominant class in which dominant beliefs, values, and social practices are produced and distributed throughout a whole range of institutions. . . Hegemony functions to define the meaning and limits of common-sense. . . by positing certain ideas as natural and universal.

Dr. Arce proposed that the backlash against bilingual education in the U.S. is a function of cultural hegemony; a "counter-hegemony exists within elements" of bilingual education and within some approaches to general education as well, supporting a pedagogy "based on theories and practices of liberation that empower students." Similarly, Dr. DeVillar noted that the standard educational approach functions to "resocialize" students from subordinate cultures, whereas an approach based on Vygotskian principles helps to validate each student's cultural experience and values.

In their presentation, ***Juan Necochea***, from California State University at San Marcos, and ***Zulmara Cline***, from Chapman University and the Lompoc Unified School District, were most explicit in linking the discussion of constructivist approaches and power relationships. They proposed a "confluent/multicultural framework for teaching and learning." They observed that, "although the personal characteristics of students in public education are extremely diverse, schools traditionally have been designed to educate a fairly homogeneous group of students, thus creating a growing incongruency between the needs of diverse students and traditional school practices." In confluent education, "cognitive and physical domains are integrated into a unified whole which guides the teaching and learning process." Confluent education helps "to produce a deep understanding of the self through reflective and metacognitive practices"; it uses "process oriented activities that focus on group dynamics." As a result, learning

"is constructed through a dynamic interplay between student needs and strengths." Multicultural education focuses on "the formation of cultural identity" and on accommodation of "the personal characteristics of diverse students." Together the two approaches can be highly effective in facilitating meaningful learning and in giving effective voice to the great diversity within contemporary classrooms.

Calls for change in policy or practice

Most conference presentations dealt, at least indirectly, with the need for change, whether in policies and mandates, financial supports, research, teacher preparation, or school or classroom practice. However, some presenters focused more explicitly on recommendations designed to strengthen instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Such recommendations ranged from the broad, such as a call for "systemic perspectives" in planning educational services, to the specific, such as strategies for addressing English spelling errors among Spanish-speaking students.

Three presenters recommended changes in school or classroom practices. ***Betty Merchant***, from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, based her recommendations on a failed experiment by an urban school district to establish an alternative high school for newly arrived immigrant students who had not yet acquired basic literacy skills in any language. She described events leading to the opening, and rapid closure, of the alternative school. According to her study, poor planning and a focus on short-term goals were major factors in the school's closure only one year after it opened. Dr. Merchant emphasized the need for "a systemic perspective" if the needs of diverse student populations are to be effectively addressed. She concluded:

> Demographic changes require schools to examine how they define their mission, facilitate access, create opportunities and organize themselves for teaching and learning. . . District-level administrators can become more proficient in anticipating the areas in which the greatest needs are likely to occur and. . . can begin to develop collaborative, systemic approaches for addressing these needs.

Federico Reyes Rodríguez, Director de Capacitación, Ingeniería Organizacional, SA de CV-Durango, in Durango, México, examined concepts of quality related to students, families, and the workplace. He recommended an educational process that will increase students' quality of life; this involves incorporating participatory learning and teamwork approaches that have been adopted in the workplace. And finally, ***Olatokunbo Fashola***, from CRESPAR, Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, reported on a study that examined the kinds of errors

Spanish-speaking children made in spelling English words. Dr. Fashola noted the study's implications for fostering English language literacy, particularly the need for teachers to recognize "when students' errors in English occur as a result of their applying rules that are correct in their native language."

Two presenters focused on research needs. ***Joy K. Peyton,*** from the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education, outlined a proposed research agenda for exploring adult education in English-as-a-Second Language instruction. Noting that adult ESL instruction "is the fastest growing area of adult education," she reported on the Clearinghouse's efforts to gather ideas and information from practitioners in the field and on the research agenda that evolved from these data. The agenda suggests five broad areas around which proposed research topics are organized: "the learners themselves; program design and instructional content and practices; teacher preparation and staff development; learner assessment and outcomes; and policy." Top priorities for research are "assessment of adult ESL learner progress and achievement," and "measurement of the impact of participation in adult ESL programs on the lives of participants."

Christian Faltis, professor of Bilingual Education at Arizona State University, included in his survey of high school-level bilingual education a set of recommendations for further research. He noted the need for further research on "good teacher practices" at the secondary level, and on "academic language," pointing out that "very little is known about the discourses students need to learn for various subject areas, or the extent to which academic discourses cut across various areas of study." In addition to recommending a research agenda, Dr. Faltis also cited the need for changes in teacher preparation. He concluded:

> Secondary teachers working in multilingual school communities need new ways of teaching content so that students who are becoming bilingual can participate and benefit from classroom activities. Teachers need to be retooled in the area of assessment. . . There needs to be a specialization within secondary education for those teachers who plan to teach immigrant students with little previous schooling.

Effective programs and practices

A number of presentations described effective educational programs and practices. A majority of these addressed classroom practices aimed at improving achievement among language minority and other students classified as "at risk"; several others addressed teacher preparation, while one focused on approaches to strengthening general postsecondary education.

Several presenters offered broad overviews rather than descriptions of specific approaches. In his written review of policies and programs for English language learners, ***Gilbert N. García,*** from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, described four "inter-related lessons that promote the effective acquisition of English for LEP students." These lessons, derived from Department of Education-sponsored research or development programs, included, first, tailoring educational services to "the unique linguistic, cultural, and familial characteristics and the academic learning needs of each LEP student." This task involves providing "the same core content provided to English proficient peers," but with alternative approaches suited to the individual student's needs. A second effective strategy is providing instruction in students' native language on an as-needed basis, "as the foundation for learning age- and grade-appropriate English language arts and for learning core academic content in English." This includes providing assessments in students' native language where needed. Third on Dr. García's list was adjusting instructional time to ensure acquisition "of the speaking and literacy skills that typical all-English classrooms require." This means adapting time requirements to individual student needs and progress. A fourth strategy involves teaching some LEP students in alternative programs or groups before they are transitioned into mainstream, all-English classrooms. With this approach, assistance is provided as long as it is needed, rather than geared to rigid, pre-specified time limits.

Another broad overview was presented by ***Catherine Snow,*** Harvard University, who summarized major findings from the National Research Council report, *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. This widely respected report found that "the key to preventing reading difficulties is excellent instruction. Effective teachers are those who have the knowledge base to craft a mix of instructional materials and strategies that meet the needs of each child." In examining the knowledge base on reading, the NRC found that children with reading difficulties do not need vastly different kinds of support than other children, but they may need "much more intensive support." The report highlights effective practices for parents and families, preschool teachers, and K-12 teachers and principals. Specific findings related to students with limited English proficiency include the need to learn to speak English before being taught to read English. If there are materials and teachers proficient in students' first language, then language-minority children "should be taught how to read in their native language while acquiring proficiency in spoken English and then subsequently taught to extend their skills to reading in English." If such materials and teachers are not available, the "priority should be to develop the children's proficiency in spoken English." (For additional information regarding Dr. Snow's presentation, see "Professional development issues.")

A third broad survey was presented by ***Olatokunbo Fashola*** and ***Robert Slavin*** of Johns Hopkins University. They described "the current state of evidence of effectiveness for replicable programs available to elementary and middle schools" serving at-risk students. Their survey of effective programs was geared particularly for use by Title I schools in search of replicable approaches. Programs were selected according to specific criteria of effectiveness and replicability. Effective schoolwide reform programs included Success for All/Lee Conmigo; Drs. Fashola and Slavin noted that "for language minority students, the effects of Success for All have been particularly positive." Also mentioned were Roots and Wings, Accelerated Schools, School Development Program, Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline, and New American Schools designs. Effective classroom instructional programs included a variety of cooperative learning methods. Curriculum-specific programs in early childhood, reading, writing, language arts, and mathematics also were highlighted, as were tutoring programs. In considering the entire range of programs matching the criteria for effectiveness, Drs. Fashola and Slavin identified "a set of conditions that are usually present in programs that work." Such programs: (1) "have clear goals, emphasize methods and materials linked to those goals, and constantly assess students' progress toward the goals"; (2) "have well-specified components, materials, and professional development procedures"; (3) "provide extensive professional development"; and (4) are "disseminated by organizations that focus on the quality of implementation." (For more information on the presentation by Drs. Fashola and Slavin, see "Professional development issues.")

A presentation by ***Mary Ragland***, from the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin, described characteristics of effective Title I schoolwide programs within the state of Texas. Dr. Ragland summarized findings from a study of 26 successful Texas schoolwide programs. The study found "more differences than similarities in instructional programs and approaches." However, certain common characteristics were identified and grouped into seven "themes": (1) a "focus on the academic success of every student"; (2) "no excuses," meaning that schools did not try to make excuses for low performance but rather continued to seek solutions; (3) "experimentation," that is, encouragement to try different approaches when the current approach was not succeeding; (4) "inclusivity," or considering everyone to be part of the solution, (5) a "sense of family," with schools frequently adopting the metaphor of "the school as a family"; (6) "collaboration and trust," which includes room for disagreement; (7) and a "passion for learning and growing," with school staffs consistently engaged in learning to improve their own skills and practice.

In a companion presentation to Dr. Ragland's, representatives from one of the 26 schools in the Dana Center study discussed their specific approach to second language instruction. ***Adalberto García,*** principal, and ***Arturo Gonzalez,*** facilitator, represented the Hueco, Texas, elementary school, a 1998 Texas

Education Agency-recognized school. Hueco Elementary School uses Success for All in its dual language format; the school also employs a standards-based mathematics curriculum. High expectations for all students and an emphasis on family involvement in schooling are also important aspects of the school program.

Josephine Arce, of the College of Education at San Francisco State University, focused her attention on a single classroom. She described a Spanish two-way immersion classroom in which "the teacher strived to apply a philosophy of transformative education, grounded in social consciousness." Via a case study, Dr. Arce documented the teacher's approach:

> She based her instructional practices on inquiry and discovery. She recognized that children's voices are central to social and learning interactions. . . She combined high academic expectations for all her students with a classroom community that was a caring place for all its members.

There was a strong emphasis on student dialogue, and learning activities encouraged students "to explore their own life experiences and to use their fabulous stores of empathy to relate to other's life experiences." The curriculum provided "a comprehensive literacy program," with "emphasis on early literacy development in Spanish." Student outcomes were strongly positive: "All the students left first grade reading at high levels of first, second or even higher grade levels," attaining "high academic achievement in their primary language while also acquiring English (or Spanish) as a second language."

Two presentations outlined collaborative approaches for recruiting and preparing teachers with culturally and linguistically diverse students. ***Herlinda Elena Cancino,*** from San Francisco State University, and ***Patricia Velasco,*** Director of the Museum of Science in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, México, made a joint presentation describing a collaborative program that involved four institutions, three in Chiapas, México, and one (San Francisco State University) in California. The program was designed "to provide a cross-cultural educational experience" for pre-service and in-service SFSU students. As part of the practicum for two SFSU courses, students traveled to Chiapas to observe and participate in a bilingual school or to volunteer in one of several community-based organizations in San Cristobal de las Casas. Courses were co-taught by professors from SFSU and the collaborating institutions. Students gained knowledge and skills in working in diverse school settings; they also learned about the educational background and life experiences of Méxican students.

Lidia Guzmán Zurita, a teacher from México, discussed her experience as a participant in a program involving the Los Angeles Unified School District and

the Ministry of Public Education of México. Through this program, educators from México are recruited for temporary teaching positions in California school districts, in order to alleviate the shortage of Spanish-speaking bilingual educators within the state. Ms. Guzmán Zurita described her experience as a positive one; she noted that students responded well to teachers who shared their linguistic and cultural background.

While K-12 education was the principal focus of most presenters, postsecondary education was also addressed. ***María Del Carmen Ainaga Vargas,*** Researcher with the Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas at the Universidad Veracruzana, Veracruz, México, focused on effective institution-wide approaches for improving secondary education. She described the educational model adopted by the Universidad Veracruzana. The model, grounded in constructivist learning theory, concentrates on facilitating "meaningful learning" through active student participation and the cultivation of students' lifelong learning skills.

Professional development issues

As noted earlier, professional development was a major focus among the varied conference presentations. Presenters noted the discrepancies between current professional practice and the findings of research and experience. In practice, professional development is typically characterized by brief sessions on isolated topics, with few links to teachers' specific experience or concerns, and with little or no follow-up support. In contrast, as presenters consistently observed, to effectively change their instructional approaches, teachers need ongoing staff development that is grounded in both theory and actual classroom practice, that builds from their current understandings, and that includes coaching and other forms of in-classroom support.

Two presenters explicitly discussed staff development for teachers of language minority students. ***Raymond Padilla,*** from the Department of Chicano Studies at Arizona State University, examined the question of what bilingual teachers need to know and to be able to do in order to be effective in the classroom, as a basis for considering professional development approaches. He explored findings from three types of sources: expert recommendations, state policies, and empirical research results. Expert recommendations, he noted, include proficiency in both English and the second language, and "proficiency in the methods of instruction used in bilingual classes." State policies tend to be expressed in terms of academic courses and credits and are difficult to characterize in terms of teacher skills and knowledge; however, more and more states are moving toward skills-based requirements. Research outcomes vary, leading Dr. Padilla to conclude that "we still lack a great deal of understanding of what exactly are the practices of exemplary bilingual teachers, the ones that

are successful in increasing the educational performance of language minority students."

Margarita Calderón, from CRESPAR at Johns Hopkins University, also focused on teachers of language minority students. She discussed the crisis in Texas due to the fact that, in 1998-99, schools became accountable for state test results of Spanish dominant as well as English dominant students, via the Spanish TAAS tests. Dr. Calderón noted the "quick scramble to do intensive Spanish TAAS preparation" and the problems such hasty efforts create for quality instruction. She stated, "It is not enough for teachers to be better trained in the technical skills of teaching TAAS-related Spanish." Rather, "the intellectual side of teaching must receive greater emphasis" in professional development. Dr. Calderón recommended the creation of ongoing learning communities within schools and districts, and described the establishment of "Teachers Learning Communities" in selected schools.

Several presenters focused on staff development for broader student populations. In discussing the teacher's role as sociocultural mediator, ***Esteban Díaz***, from California State University at Santa Barbara, made a number of recommendations regarding staff development. In order to prepare teachers for this more interactive role, Dr. Díaz noted, teachers need to be committed to ongoing staff development involving both outside facilitators and sharing among peers. He recommended a mix of staff development strategies, including hour-long mini-workshops conducted by teachers for each other, ongoing study and support groups, demonstrations and coaching, and mentoring activities.

In reporting on the National Research Council's findings regarding reading instruction, ***Catherine Snow***, Harvard University, specifically addressed teacher education and staff development. She observed that, "for staff development to make a difference, it must be based on the needs of the teachers in the school and also delivered in the school." Effective staff development also must incorporate certain characteristics, including "a focus on modeling, coaching, and explicit feedback for the teacher"; involvement of teachers in "planning and developing the sessions"; congruence between the goals of the session and the school's goals; opportunities for discussion and reflection; consideration of individual differences among participating teachers; commitment from teachers to apply their learnings in the classroom; and mentoring.

And finally, ***Olatokunbo Fashola*** and ***Robert Slavin*** from Johns Hopkins University, in identifying characteristics of effective programs for at-risk students, included the characteristic of providing "extensive professional development." Drs. Fashola and Slavin noted that

> most of the successful programs we identified provide many days of in-service followed by in-class technical assistance to give teachers detailed feedback on their program implementations. Typically, teachers work with each other and with peer or expert coaches. . . Training focuses on comprehensive strategies that replace, not just supplement, teachers' current strategies.

Conclusion

The Fourth Binational Conference demonstrated that, in spite of a general U.S. political climate discouraging to bilingual education, the educational community remains active in seeking to improve achievement among language minority students. Moreover, educators in México are working to strengthen border schools, both within their own country and for students who may, at one time or another, be schooled on either side of the border. Individual educators and researchers, schools, and other institutions are working across state, national, and cultural borders to find common ground, to learn from each other, and to address the growing interdependence of nations made increasingly evident by a global economy. As conference co-host and presenter ***Margarita Calderón*** concluded,

> Collective inquiry leads to more profound knowledge and meaningful change. Bringing two divergent groups together stimulates and enriches each other's ideas and stretches them to dream of things never before contemplated. . . Language and cultural differences are erased when educators are learning that which is meaningful and relevant to their students' needs. We all have the same problems, fears, aspirations, and dreams.

Appendix
List of Presenters and Presentations Cited

Ainaga Vargas, María Del Carmen, Researcher with the Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas de la Universidad Veracruzana — Conference paper: "La transformación del docente" ("The transformation of educators").

Arce, Josephine, College of Education, Elementary Department, San Francisco State University — Conference paper: "Transformative education in a first grade Spanish two-way immersion classroom."

Arce, Josephine, Assistant Professor, Department of Elementary Education, San Francisco State University — Conference presentation, "Cultural hegemony: The politics of bilingual education," based on an article of the same title published in *Multicultural Education*, Winter 1998, pp. 10-16. (Quotations in this proceedings document are taken from the article.)

Calderón, Margarita, Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland — Presentation summary: "Standards, assessment and professional development for effective bilingual programs — not to mention good Spanish TAAS results. . ."

Cancino, Herlinda Elena, San Francisco State University, and Patricia Velasco, Director of the Museum of Science, San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas — Conference paper: "Constructing bridges across borders: Professional development for teacher education."

DeVillar, Robert, Chair, Department of Teacher Education, University of Texas at El Paso — Conference paper: "Del interludio cotidiano al potencial cultural: Comunidades de aprendizaje como construcción social" ("From daily interludes to cultural potential: Learning communities as a social construction").

Díaz, Esteban, California State University at Santa Barbara — Conference paper: "Creando zonas de desarrollo negativas o positivas en el aula" (alternate English title: "The teacher as a sociocultural mediator").

Faltis, Christian, PhD, Professor of Bilingual Education, Arizona State University, Phoenix — Conference paper: "Bilingual education in secondary schools: What we've learned; what we're learning."

Fashola, Olatokunbo, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland — Conference presentation, "Predicting spelling errors in Spanish," based on an article by Fashola, Priscilla A. Drum, Richard E. Mayer, and Sang-Jin Kang, "A

cognitive theory of orthographic transitioning: Predictable errors in how Spanish-speaking children spell English words," American Educational Research Journal, Winter 1996, pp. 825-843. (Quotations in this proceedings document are taken from the article.)

Fashola, Olatokunbo S., and Robert E. Slavin, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland — Conference presentation, "Promising programs for elementary and middle schools: Evidence of effectiveness and replicability," based on an article of the same title, published in the *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 2(3), pp. 251-307. (Quotations in this proceedings document are taken from the article.)

Ferreiro Gravié, Ramón, Universidad La Salle, México, D.F. — Presentation summary: "El constructivismo desde la perspectiva de L.S. Vygotsky" ("Constructivism from the perspective of L.S. Vygotsky").

García, Adalberto, Principal, and Arturo Gonzalez, Facilitator, Hueco, Texas, Elementary School — Presentation summary: "Successful practices for 2nd language acquisition."

García, Gilbert N., Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. — Conference paper: "Four lessons from research on the length of time it takes limited English proficient students to acquire sufficient English to succeed in the typical all-English classroom."

Guzman Zurita, Lidia, Maestra, México, D.F. — Conference paper: "Mi participación en el programa de educación bilingüe en el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Los Angeles" ("My participation in a bilingual education program in the Los Angeles Unified School District").

Merchant, Betty, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana — Conference paper: "Now you see it; now you don't: A district's short-lived commitment to an alternative high school for newly-arrived immigrants."

Necochea, Juan, California State University, San Marcos, and Zulmara Cline, Chapman University and Lompoc Unified School District — Conference paper: "The role of education in the pursuit of equity and social justice in diverse settings."

Padilla, Raymond, Professor, Department of Chicano Studies, Arizona State University — Conference paper: "La capacitación de docentes para la educación bilingüe" ("Teacher training for bilingual education").

Peyton, Joy K., Center for Applied Linguistics — Conference presentation, "Research agenda for adult ESL," based on a paper of the same title prepared by the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education at the Center for Applied Linguistics, n.d.

Ragland, Mary, The Charles A. Dana Center, The University of Texas at Austin — Conference presentation, "Successful Texas schoolwide programs: Research study results," based on a report of the same title by Laura Lein, Joseph F. Johnson, Jr., and Ragland, published by the Charles A. Dana Center, n.d. (Quotations in this proceedings document are taken from the report.)

Reyes Rodríguez, Federico, Director de Capacitación, Ingeniería Organizacional, SA de CV-Durango, Durango, México — Conference paper: "Calidad en la persona, la família, y el trabajo" ("Quality of life in the individual, family, and workplace").

Rippberger, Susan, PhD., Educational Leadership, with Kathleen Staudt, PhD., Political Science, University of Texas at El Paso — Conference presentation, "Comparing values in education on the U.S.-México border, El Paso and Ciudad Juárez," based on a paper of the same title under submission to *Cuaderno No. 2 del Consoctio Internacional de Educación Fronteriza.*

Rodriguez, Carmen, Attorney, El Paso, TX — Conference paper: "Bilingualism and its legal framework."

Snow, Catherine, Harvard University — Conference presentation, "Preventing reading difficulties in young children," based on a summary report of the findings by the National Research Council.